

From neighborhood of culture to cultural neighborhood of São Luís: aspects of identity, memory, and territory in the cultural neighborhood of Madre Deus (Stigmas And Perspectives)

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Abstract - This article aims to understand the process of the cultural formation of the neighborhood Madre Deus, through the categories of identity, memory, and space, as well as to emphasize the direct relationship of the residents as a watershed for the legal recognition of their cultural heritage in São Luís. It also aims to verify the perspectives of the law already in force, concerning socio-economic and cultural changes and possibilities. For this purpose, we are using bibliographic research, virtual research in local media, in addition to our experience in the locus of this research. However, it must be initially concluded that although it has a whole cultural collection of great potential, the formation of the Madre Deus neighborhood and its realities comes from the dynamics between Space, Memory, and Identity that form the social and political bonds of the place and that carrying out the analysis of the three categories mentioned above is what makes the understanding of the process of constitution of the Neighborhood more viable, as well as its relations with the society of São Luís.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the historical and academic scenarios in which we live, it is very common – and we would even say commonplace – for people to observe social symbols and identities constructed from a specific part of a society to explain and homogenize the whole of that society. One of the social layers that compose that society produces and imposes a reality as a model that, many times, is unrelatable to a large part of the population. This concept is closely related to the idea of National Culture, a notion by Stuart Hall, (2006, p. 50), which says that this concept “is a discourse - a way to build meanings that influence and organize both our actions and the conception that we have of ourselves”.

The discourse mentioned by the aforementioned author can be seen in the project of the construction of the Brazilian national identity. This took place even in imperial times, whose interest was to build an imagined national identity, forged from elements that would give materiality to a national memory that,

Would start to work towards providing this country with visual and affective memory and a new calendar of dates, heroes, and holidays. [...]. It was about finding an honorable 'origin' at a remote time when indigenous people and white nobles coexisted in an equally legendary region lost in an immemorial past. [...]. (Schwarcz, 2011, p. 337).

Based on the discourse of Schwarcz, it is clear that, for the first time in the country, a specific 'national heritage' forged in aestheticized indigenous peoples was legitimized, ignoring the black and mestizo population of the country, freed or enslaved. In this sense, "there were, therefore, the foundations for this moment of foundation of our culture, which mythically allied the 'natural' and 'nature'. The author emphasizes that "Brazil was never so tropical and exuberant and never so white and indigenous, but never black." (Schwarcz, 2011, p.341)

But what we observed is that not every attempt to induce facts and behavior is capable of mixing water with oil; even though we are taught the wonders of being Brazilian since childhood (as our fellow compatriots tend to say: "we live in a tropical country, blessed by God and beautiful by nature! After all, God is Brazilian") our daily lives insist on reminding us of the countless misadventures that these same notions bring us. Brazil, as a society built by many peoples, is marked by the cultural differences of these peoples.

In these terms, when talking about society, Stuart Hall (2006, p. 18) states that these are "characterized by 'difference', they are crossed by different social divisions and antagonisms that produce a variety of different 'subject-positions' - that is, identities - for individuals'.

Still dealing with national identity, Chimamanda (2019:18) draws attention to the dangers of a single history, forged from narratives that reproduce the interests of hegemonic cultures. For, the construction of narratives of the history of a people implies power. "Power is the ability not just to tell other people's stories, but to make it your ultimate history." Therefore, narratives for the construction of a plural history, based on differences, require different ways of telling stories. "Because stories matter, many stories matter. Stories were used to despoil and slander, but they can also be used to empower and humanize."

Bearing in mind that the place of memory in our society is almost always institutionalized, that is, that in most cases, what we know as material or immaterial symbols of our historical or cultural memory are officially and externally instituted to the individual; rarely do these symbols fully represent our true individual or collective memory.

Therefore, we can rethink the real significance of what is presented to us as property, heritage, and identity and which element becomes more latent within the historical and social context of individuals: the coercive memory (in a way that others defend what will be relevant that we have as significant memories) or which would be our true memory places.

In this context, the cultural neighborhood of Madre Deus emerges. And even though it is not a forged space, and officially institutionalized with collective memory, converges to itself much of the cultural memory of its residents, neighbors, and sympathizers who autarchically name it as the cultural center of São Luís, and has among its alleys its greatest asset, its "nation" and much of its history, identity and memory, in addition to being the space where intrinsic aspects of its culture are fully exercised.

The peculiarity of Madre Deus presents a specific form of social production, by proposing a differentiated approach to issues relating to the traditional urban architectural fabric. Even before the Projeto Viva, there was already an organization of popular culture manifestations, with the Carnival and the June circuits involving the community (Carvalho, 2006, p. 43).

The neighborhood of Madre Deus had been known from a very early age as a cultural neighborhood in the city of São Luís, and this concerning its great cultural and intellectual framework found in its effusive calendar of parties, manifestations, ways of living, knowledge, and religiosity.

For the large island of São Luís, the location became even more famous in the 80s and mainly 90s, where it became the focal attraction in the festive periods of Carnival and São João in the city, the neighborhood from then on gained the status of a neighborhood of cultural effervescence, starting to count on more investment and visibility, mainly on the part of the state government, which saw this dynamic as a way to dynamize and promote the economy and tourism during those periods.

Despite the "favorable scenario", all this buzz surrounding the neighborhood was concentrated in seasonal periods, and it was not able to raise the status quo of Madre Deus in a continuous and conjunctural way, and the place was forgotten in other periods of the year and depreciated throughout decades and governments to the detriment of truly institutionalized and official symbols of collective memory and history in the city, especially the cultural district of Praia Grande.

That changed, at least theoretically, on May 28, 2018, when Bill 105/2018, authored by state deputy Roberto Costa (MDB), was approved. It declared the Madre Deus a cultural neighborhood and Intangible Cultural Heritage from the State of Maranhão, the cultural manifestations of the "Grande Madre Deus" region; This denomination also includes neighborhoods adjacent to it, such as Goiabal, Fonte do Bispo, Lira, Belira, Codozinho, and Macaúba. In addition to other 46 popular manifestations.

It is noteworthy that the area of Madre Deus and its community (which autarchically calls itself the “Nação Madre Deus (Madre Deus Nation)”) consolidate together the ideas of physical, symbolic, and affective space, and inherent and significant issues regarding memory and the identity, these being the main nuances to be studied in this article, combining them with their perspectives regarding the future of this region and its inhabitants. Thus, the central theme of this research follows the following development: the methodological proposal is presented below. The third part approaches the neighborhood of Madre Deus in its historical aspects, considering the tradition and oral memory of the neighborhood. In the fourth moment, the “Nation” Madre Deus and its identity symbols are shown, followed by the approach regarding Madre Deus Cultural District stigmas and perspectives, and finally the final considerations.

II. METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSAL

This research has an Interdisciplinary character since it requires a dialogue with categories from different areas of knowledge such as Geography, Tourism, Sociology, and History. Categories of space, memory, and identity will be studied by using authors such as Tuan, Maurice Halbwachs, and Stuart Hall respectively, to better understand the process of cultural formation in the neighborhood of Madre Deus in São Luís, Maranhão.

According to Minayo (2013), there is not such a thing as one single good method. What exists is complements to the methods adopted. In this sense, qualitatively, our research aims to be explanatory, in which the means used will be bibliographic, which will guide the entire paper, as we will analyze the latest works from the perspective of our research, in addition to local newspapers, social media. And it will also be empirical since we will use our latest experiences with the complementary research object in this paper.

The production of this work will allow a greater understanding and analysis of the dynamization of the categories of memory, identity, and space in the formation process of the cultural neighborhood Madre Deus.

III. AS IN THE TIME OF OUR GRANDPARENTS

The neighborhood of Madre Deus is located to the southeast of the island of São Luís, formerly known as Ponta de Santo Amaro. It was the place chosen to build a chapel in honor of Our Lady of Madre Deus, the saint that today gives its name to the neighborhood. Such a name not only reveals the strong Catholic influence throughout the city of São Luís in the 18th and 19th centuries but also

leads us to reflect on the strong religiosity of those people and how it influenced the formation of the neighborhood.

With the expulsion of the Jesuits from Portugal and their colonies in 1760, their assets were confiscated, and the house of Madre Deus (as it was more popularly known) became the home of the State Government, while the official headquarters were under renovation. In 1811 the Governor's Palace was completed and the house of Madre Deus became the headquarters of the Military Hospital. Today, the former home of Madre Deus houses the Tarquínio Lopes General Hospital. The space built by man translates his needs and enriches human notion and cognition (Chagas, 2002).

The first report about the neighborhood is in the works of Marques (1713)

On October 4, 1713, in the sítio da roça, in this city, Captain-Major Manuel de Silva Serrão and his wife transferred to Captain-Major Constantino Sá “the pillars, arches, foundations, and other works found on the land bridge called Santo Amaro, made with a license from the City Council to build a church there, and they also granted him the mercy that the City Council had done the same for him[...]. Captain Constantino thought it safer to ask for this same mercy for himself, as it was given to the said Serrão, and requesting the chamber “he said he was making a hermitage for Our Lady of Madre Deus, the dawn of life” and it was granted to him in the council of December 1, 1713[...]. We do not know how it later became the domain of the Jesuits (Marques, 1970, p. 434).

The neighborhood of Madre Deus extended as an urban settlement, up to where there was a municipal slaughterhouse, close to the Bacanga river, which served as a population attraction center for people from other cities that were looking for alternatives of survival. In an interview with Zé Toinho in a research carried out by Abmalena Sanches, he finds “The ancient Madre Deus, it was where the FEBEM building is today, it was an old slaughterhouse. So Madre Deus was a neighborhood that was born out of these people, cattle killers, and fishermen. These people who do some things, some events to have fun”. (SANCHES,)

But the fishing was not Madre Deus's only economic activity. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of this century, the neighborhood began to receive workers, attracted by the installation of textile factories there: Companhia de Fiação e Tecidos de Cânhamo (CEPRAMA) and the Companhia de Fiação e Tecelagem São Luís, and Fábrica Santa Amélia. Some slums located on the street of the Crioulas and the street São Pantaleão

are witnesses to that period. These were areas where small rooms were built and rented to factory workers (Chagas, 2002).

We believe, based on these data, that already at that time a settlement was formed near that place, which with their memories and their identities, shaped its space over the centuries, forming the neighborhood we know today. It can be seen that it was with the construction of the Bacanga Dam and the dissociation of the factories in the area that most of its residents migrated to other regions, however, those who settled there found a bond of identity in the festive character of the region. The parties of the neighborhood depended on this community to happen, the residents were the actors and the audience of their shows; their moment is found there, their time to feel represented. As explained by Caillois (1988), regular life, busy with the daily works, peaceful, subject to a system, full of concerns, in which the maxim maintains order in the world, is opposed to the effervescence of parties.

Seeking to understand the bases of support of a group, in social, cultural, or economic spheres, is not a recent proposal within the academic universe of academic activity, however, it is worth observing how this process can take place so that research happens in a complete format, encompassing the due aspects related to the object, it can become slippery when it is not covering the rest that makes up the globality of the existing relationships in these communities; for this reason, in addition to showing the festive Madre Deus, this paper also seeks to relativize and contextualize within a larger scenario the many particularities of the complex place.

It is mainly in the festive character that Madre Deus sees and represents itself as a link of identity within her community, filling even more mechanisms for the operation of social and affective bonds. Perez (2002) suggests that parties are a multiverse configured as a polyphony of social voices and different formats of organization and celebration.

In this paper, Madre Deus also appears like a neighborhood community that benefits from its state of festive contemplation to increase their businesses that help their livelihood, such as bars, small restaurants, cafeterias, and shops, which are busier during periods such as Carnival and São João, periods in which the neighborhood is visited by people from all regions of the city.

In these terms, the theme of memory gains importance when we look at the Madre Deus Cultural District. Because its memory could not be recovered from the past if it had not been preserved, through the permanence of space and of its identities. Each street, each property, awakens us to the daily life of the past, a memory, where

reflection is capable of reproducing constitutive memories of the cultural neighborhood (Halbwachs, 1990).

Concerning constitutive memories, it is possible to consider the importance of the collective memory of a place, in this case, the cultural neighborhood of Madre Deus. It is important to realize that these memories need to be formed considering the collective, to obtain facts, as well as narratives, which can integrate to the sense of the other and thus contribute to the materialization of memory in the present time and its given space (Halbwachs, 1990).

IV. TRADITIONS AND ORAL MEMORY IN THE CULTURAL CENTER

The old Madre Deus

Is the flower of São Luís by nature itself

Its batucada is what ends with sadness

A dynasty, a group of sambistas

Tradition of royalty

Whoever knew her won't forget the fights of

Zeção and Zé Bedeu

Don't hurt the flower

Madre Deus is a garden of Love

Don't hurt the flower

Hanging garden that nature created".

(CABOQUINHO - MADREDIVINE POET).

The memory of a people must be made up of many recollections, but also many lapses; this is something that we easily perceive in the Cultural Neighborhood of Madre Deus that, despite having several problems, finds in its parties, in its joy and in its manifestations, the driving force that guides its lives: at a given moment - the moment of riptide – these people feel free from their problems, to give voice and space to the joy and festive character that is intrinsic to that region; being represented by these, but also represented through them their reality.

At many times; Maurice Halbwachs insinuates not only the selectivity of all memory but also a process of "negotiation" to reconcile collective and individual memories: "For our memory to benefit from that of others, it is not enough for them to bring us their testimonies: it is also necessary that it has not failed to agree with its memories and that there are enough points of contact between itself and the others so that the memory that others bring to us can be reconstructed on a common basis." (Pollak, 1989).

Durkheim (1989) points out that festive moments, as well as producing a state of effervescence, also serve to maintain the vitality of collective beliefs, preventing their disappearance from the social memory of different human groups.

The Madre Divina Community mainly uses its traditions and its oral memories passed from generation to generation to refer to its deeds and its social constructions. It is commonplace to hear groups in the streets and sidewalks talking about the pioneers and how they contributed to the creation not only of the neighborhood but also and mainly to the creation of its cultural manifestations, and these are undoubtedly the main reasons for pride among these families.

“Cê sabe Seu Beto, neto do fundador do boi da Madre Deus; Gersinho, aquele filho do fundador da Turma do Quinto.”; the history related to the pioneers serves more than a simple and basic narration of the life and work histories of the families, it almost becomes a surname, a title, something that identifies and differentiates you from others in the community, guaranteeing them in the process a distinctive status quo within the group.

Each location, each manifestation refers to a place of memory that is simultaneously representative for its own collectivity, and unique for each individual; another interesting point to be observed is the difference in perceptions and memory relationships that we observe between its residents (actors and protagonists of everyday life) and its visitors; the first ones understand and know it in its qualities and virtues, in its golden moments and those of depreciation and forgetfulness, they live together and represent it, therefore they have a distinctive look, thus possessing different references to memories; the second, the visitors almost always from seasonal periods, have access to the site during festive moments, relating to the neighborhood memory ties linked to the joy and hospitality of its residents, knowing very little about aspects such as what you want to forget or not show to the general public, consequently the memories and stories of the region do not always converge equally for all its audiences and characters. In these moments, as in a job interview, Madre Deus shows only its best aspects, trying to hide or minimize as much as possible its “flaws”.

As said by Pierre Nora (1993, p 9):

Memory installs remembrance in the sacred, history sets it free and makes it always prosaic. Memory emerges from a group it unites, which is to say, as Halbwachs did, that there are as many memories as there are groups; that it is, by nature, multiple and decelerated, collective, plural, and individualized. History, on the contrary, belongs to everyone and to

no one, which gives it a vocation for the universal. Memory is rooted in concrete, in space, in gesture, in the image, in the object. History only links temporal continuities to the evolutions and relationships of things. Memory is absolute and history only knows the relative.

V. MADRE DEUS: FROM THE PHYSICAL SPACE TO THE CULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

With the construction of the Bacanga Dam, the Tabatinga beach was grounded, which diminished fishing activity, as it caused the boats that used to dock there to dock at Portinho, causing the majority of its population to migrate to new residential areas such as Anjo da Guarda, Vila Embratel, and Vila Nova.

The landfill process of the Bacanga River significantly impacted the Cultural District of Madre Deus. These transformations reveal how much space was shaped throughout the 19th to the 21st century by the population of São Luís. However, the inhabitants of the Madre Deus neighborhood were directly part of this new space, since the effects of this transformation of the space corroborate the dynamization and perpetuation of their memories and identities. (Chagas, 2002).

It is worth mentioning that most of the residents of Madre Deus were workers in the factories mentioned in this research, it is important to understand the before and after of the lives of these residents with the grounding of the Bacanga River, which will lead us to understand how much the space transformations had concrete effects on the lives of the individuals residing in this environment (Tuan, 1983).

The textile industries, fishing, and slaughterhouse corroborated another peculiarity of the place. The State of Maranhão became the 3rd largest industrial park in the country, with several of these factories installed close to the neighborhood, however, the decline of these companies accentuated the socio-economic imbalances, and encouraged the change of part of the population from the neighborhood to other areas.

According to Araújo (1986, p. 38)

There are two categories of residents in Madre Deus: the old ones who form a traditional niche, who remained due to prestige, investment, and family ties, and the more recent residents, attracted by the frequent festivals that enable the trade of cultural subsistence.

The territorial dimension that, according to Lamas (1993), is composed by the city itself. On this scale, the shape of cities is structured through the articulation of

different forms to the urban dimension with different neighborhoods linked together. The neighborhood of Madre Deus is surrounded, in its mediations by a set of small neighborhoods such as Lira, Belira, Codozinho, Goiabal, Macaúba, São Pantaleão, Fonte do Bispo, Vila Passos, Vila Bessa, Santiago, and part of Areinha.

Following the example of the rest of the country, which brings together in just one zone, or neighborhood, tourist activity of a cultural and historical character, the city of São Luís has the Praia Grande area as the main center representing the cultural elements of the city, neglecting other regions that, even if not included in the collective memory, are popularly recognized as cultural strongholds of their people and that demonstrate great potential for the implementation, promotion, and growth of tourism in the city.

Currently, if ideologically the Praia Grande is considered one of the greatest landmarks of the culture and the and economic history of São Luís, the Madre de Deus is defined as the greatest centralizing center of popular culture in the capital. Since the beginning of the 20th century, Madre Deus has been consecrated as the stage for folkloric and artistic manifestations of popular culture in Maranhão.

Thus, the description of the place, of established social practices, helps to build the web of images and relevant and essential meanings for the people who build and experience the place (Santos, 2007). The space, therefore, becomes dynamic through the individuals belonging to this space, thus making it fundamental and even the starting point for the emergence of the place, as well as the understanding of what it will be in the future.

VI. THE NATION OF MADRE DEUS (IDEAS AND SYMBOLIC IDEALS OF IDENTITY)

At some moments in our lives, we are asked to do something that may seem relatively easy: describe who we are, including a self-analysis of our main strengths and weaknesses, and also our perception of the other; It is easy to see in these moments how easy it is to attribute (or not) values and highlight significant points in the other, a task that becomes complicated when we talk about ourselves.

This can be a cultural trait, since talking, observing, and criticizing the "other" may seem much more interesting to us, however, this can also serve as self-criticism, so that we can learn to observe ourselves as protagonists of our history, analyzing through a magnifying glass our main qualities, and with greater difficulty our greatest vices and weaknesses, including ourselves too.

In the Madre Deus neighborhood, in a misappropriation, the community calls itself "Nação Madre Deus"; in a more simplistic view then, we could say that these are constituted of a community or group of individuals of common preference or sympathy; but when perceiving closely the aspects that surround them, we can see that they use this term in the broadest sense of the word, that is, as the idea of homeland, tribe or native country; these see and recognize themselves as a "whole" within a part, as a singular group with well-defined characteristics, who are proud of it.

In this perspective, identity has the power to shape feelings, values, and a multitude of items encompassed in the most varied societies in the world, thus presenting a reflection of human coexistence. Such is its importance, as it portrays a vividness of social relations and symbolic heritage that when shared historically establish the union of certain values between the members of a society. Thus, we can understand the constitution of identity in manifestations that can be developed in a wide range of situations, ranging from ways of speaking to participation in events.

According to Magnana (1990 in Araujo, 2006, p. 177) "[...] culture was not constituted of cults and customs, but of structures of meanings, through which men shape their experiences". We can understand that these experiences are acquired in everyday life through individual and collective actions. It is through this action that human achievements are expressed, which must be respected and preserved for their meanings. Great diversity in its varied manifestations must be preserved and encouraged. In the space and time in which the memory is projected as a source of the formation of cultural identities.

Stuart Hall states that: "[...] national identities are not things we are born with but are formed, transformed on the inside of representation" (Hall, 1999, 48). It is believed that this nation the author speaks about is built from a symbolic community and generates feelings of identity and belonging that do not necessarily have to be the geographic limits that this nation imposes. Thus, this construction of identity or entities is shaped when a certain group appropriates its values and manifestations, perpetuating them in its history, passing from generation to generation.

Menezes (2014, p. 68) states that "thinking about identity, or identities, means reflecting on intra and extra group ties, the process of defining belonging and difference, the symbolic and material production of borders." Thus, this construction of identity or entities is shaped when a certain group appropriates its values and

manifestations, perpetuating them in its history, passing from generation to generation.

VII. MADRE DEUS AS A CULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD ((STIGMAS AND PERSPECTIVES)

In general, when we look at the definition of neighborhood, we find that most of the time it is defined as a simple territorial division of a city; as stated by Aulete (1948), who considers neighborhood as being each of the main zones into which a city is divided, or simply a portion of territory in the vicinity of an urban nucleus. Ximenes (2000, p. 112) and Almeida (1981, p. 420) practically follow the opinion of the author, expressing, respectively, similar definitions: "Each of the major divisions of a city" and "Each of the main divisions of a city; portion of the territory of a village".

Lefebvre (1975) interprets the neighborhood as a concrete form of space and time in the city, which acts as a social module of greater convergence between the geometric space and the social space, between the quantified and the qualified.

In other passages, we notice the concern with the question of the identity of the individual to this spatial unit. In one of his reports, Sousa (1987, p. 57) states that [...] in addition to a certain territory, the neighborhood is characterized by a second element, the "sense of locality" existing in its residents, and whose formation depends not only of geographical position but also of the interchange between families and people, who wear the topographical skeleton. [...] What is a neighborhood? -I once asked an old caipira, whose quick answer expresses in a sentence what has been exposed here: - a neighborhood is a small nation. - that is the portion of land to which residents are aware of belonging, forming a certain unit different from others.

Following this context, shown by Sousa, Madre Deus is perceived not only in the physical and spatial dimensions but also in terms of social and cultural relations. Much bigger than the physical character, the neighborhood brings together aspects that surround the experience of this population.

Differently from other neighborhoods, in this study, we can observe the strong implementation of the cultural and human character in the constitution of this sphere, which previously could only be understood as a merely physical space.

In this perspective between what should be remembered and forgotten, between what is speakable and unspeakable, since the 1990s the neighborhood has gone

through moments of inconstancy concerning the implementation of public policies.

In 1998 the Government of the State of Maranhão created the "Viva Bairros" project as part of the "Cidade Viva" program, the main objective of this program was the urban reintegration of public areas in São Luís with the participation of community groups; the renovations took place basically in a structural way, to Madre Deus, or more precisely the "Largo da Madre de Deus or Largo do Caróçudo", the design and structure it has today, and it was chosen to be the prototype for the implementation of the Project Viva Bairros, totally changing its look and harmonizing its entire architectural ensemble. As Cruz (2002, p. 54) says: "Territorial planning in the configuration of places results from the necessary rationality imposed by the market as well as the spatial competitiveness between places, which is characteristic of today".

Later in the 2000s, the region gained the title of a cultural neighborhood, something that only becomes de facto and de jure on May 28, 2018, after the approval of Bill 105/2018 that declared the Madre Deus a cultural neighborhood and the cultural manifestations of the "Grande Madre Deus" region as Intangible Cultural Heritage of the State of Maranhão, recognized for its cultural strength not only by its residents and supporters but also by the entire Maranhão community.

We know that the Madre Deus region is a cultural center that brings together carnival and June events, in addition to other festivities and celebrations. A place that serves as an inspiration for poets and composers and is secular in its tradition. The Madre has an open heart to receive those who come to it to live moments of celebration, joy, and relaxation, celebrating life. Therefore, let us do justice to this honorable and recognized tribute. (Roberto Costa (MDB), state deputy author of the project)

At the same time, the state government instituted, through Decree 34,959, in 2019, the "Nosso Centro Program", which has among its priorities the revitalization of important points in the Madre Deus area, such as squares and churches, the formalization of cultural groups, as well as encouragement to the creation of cultural centers.

The observations that must be made about these interventions made to the Madre Deus neighborhood must be related to what is prioritized and what is neglected in these processes.

It should be taken into account that many times the basic structure, the development of a social and educational nature that offers the quality of life to the local

population, has not undergone major changes, remaining with the repercussion of neighborhood stigmas, present and known as the face not so festive of the community, with problems related to drugs, garbage, and marginality. Becoming an Intangible Cultural Heritage, for example, can cause an expectation of transformation of reality for the residents that is different from what is done.

Now, the positive points of the actions of the “Projeto Viva Bairros”, the “Nosso Centro Program” and the title of Cultural and Intangible Heritage, it is possible to relate it with the perspective of valuing the local cultural heritage, since, as we know, the neighborhood of Madre Deus is a place that possesses both material and immaterial cultural assets. It is also known that when it comes to the symbolic representation of the city of São Luís, the attention received by the Praia Grande neighborhood has always been greater, not extending to Madre Deus and its surroundings in the same way. This reality can be attributed to issues such as the formation of memory having been based on the wealth and glory of the city in the colonial period since the space where the Praia Grande neighborhood is located had great commercial prominence in this period.

In the current scenario, the intention in relation to these public policies that result in benefits such as revitalization and requalification of the physical space, as well as the promotion of culture and economy, we must point out another important point to be considered in the reality of Madre Deus, which is its touristic appeal.

When talking about Tourism, it is possible to highlight the merit of a chain that grows and is yielding more and more at the economic level, due to the fact that it manages to reach and move several social spheres. In the words of Boulhosa and Vasconcelos (2019):

Tourism, in recent decades, has stood out as one of the most important socio-economic activities of contemporary society, increasingly part of the lifestyle of many people who travel the world for leisure, culture, adventure, sport, nature, among others.

From the beginning, Tourism has been a driving tool in the development of societies. The opportunity for cultural exchange and economic propulsion, among other factors, gives this industry great relevance on the world stage. According to Ferreira (2005,12): “Human beings, historically, have always had the habit of traveling and getting to know other lands, other peoples and other places, unraveling their habits, cultures, and way of acting. Modern societies have made this natural curiosity an extremely profitable service, generating income”.

Thus, when we associate the actions of public programs and projects with the possibilities of tourist activity, we can achieve the appreciation of the heritage and the benefits arising from these initiatives, as in addition to promoting the conservation of the space, it also contributes to boosting the local economy and active participation of the community.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Through what has been shown here, we can conclude that when we associate the elements of space, identity, and memory in the context of the Madre Deus neighborhood, several nuances are discovered regarding this object of study.

Regarding identity, it is possible to see that in this location there is an education rooted in social relations that build symbols based on the production, mainly cultural, of the place, strengthening the idea that a society with legitimate representations has the opportunity to elaborate and conceive this representativeness.

In Madre Deus, where even “silence is revelry”, we can observe that bonds of affection and belonging within the community are closely related to memory ties shared not only in the construction and development of the neighborhood but also in the shared memories of their knowledge and modes of expression, which converge as an equalizer for this community to elaborate their stories and their symbolic myths of the neighborhood.

Memory and orality play an indispensable role in this community, which has in its memories and the transfer of its knowledge to the younger generations, a form of social and cultural reaffirmation, in the expectation of “not letting the sambar die”, not letting their stories and their “way of making culture” die among the younger generation, something that seems very difficult to achieve, given the little interest and engagement of younger people in all these processes.

The most interesting thing to note is that even today, contrary to the current context of the city life of speed, rush, lack of time, and chaos – in which neighbors of years and years do not even know each other, or just speak politely in mandatory, fast and casual social interactions – we see in this community, daily, chairs at the doors and circles of conversations in the streets, in a wanted social relationship that is commonplace and even stimulated, transporting us in an anachronistic way, to a slower time, a time of memories, memories made when they are counting their deeds and sharing stories, memories created and passed on collectively but also unique memories built on their old and current experiences and coexistences.

In the physical landscape of cities, there is a spatial division of territory where social and cultural relations are usually created. Greater than the physical character, the neighborhoods bring together aspects that surround the experience of these populations. Differently from other areas, in this study, when thinking about Madre Deus as a Cultural Neighborhood, we can observe the strong implementation of the cultural and human character in the constitution of this sphere that before could only be understood as a merely physical space.

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